



Homeland Security

Privacy Office, Mail Stop 0655

February 25, 2019

SENT VIA E-MAIL TO: foia@americanoversight.org

Austin Evers
American Oversight
1030 15th Street, NW
Suite B255
Washington, DC 20005

Re: 2019-HQFO-00438

Dear Mr. Evers:

This is the final response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), dated February 14, 2019, and received by this office on February 14, 2019. You are seeking all records reflecting communications (including email messages, email attachments, calendar invitations, memoranda or background material for meetings, or handwritten or typed notes taken during meetings) between any political appointees* at your agency and any employee or representative of Ballard Partners, including, but not limited to, any of the following individuals: a) Any individual using an email address ending in ballardfl.com, Brian Ballard, Sylvester Lukis, Susan “Susie” Wiles, Dan McFaul, Rebecca Benn, Justin Sayfie, James “Jamie” Rubin, Otto Reich, Raj Shah, Pam Bondi, Robert Wexler, Jose Felix Diaz, Katherine San Pedro, Karl Bowers, Sara Pennington, Hannah Walters, or Sara Nuvy (Date Range for Record Search: From 1/20/2017 To 2/14/2019).

We conducted a comprehensive search of files within the Department of Homeland Security Headquarters/Office of Chief Information Officer for records that would be responsive to your request. Unfortunately, we were unable to locate or identify any responsive records.

While an adequate search was conducted, you have the right to appeal this determination that no records exist within Department of Homeland Security Headquarters/Office of Chief Information Officer that would be responsive to your request. Should you wish to do so, you must send your appeal and a copy of this letter, within 90 days of the date of this letter, to: Privacy Office, Attn: FOIA Appeals, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 245 Murray Lane, SW, Mail Stop 0655, Washington, D.C. 20528-0655, following the procedures outlined in the DHS FOIA regulations at 6 C.F.R. Part 5 § 5.8. Your envelope and letter should be marked “FOIA Appeal.” Copies of the FOIA and DHS FOIA regulations are available at www.dhs.gov/foia.

If you need any further assistance or would like to discuss any aspect of your request, please contact the analyst below who processed your request and refer to **2019-HQFO-00438**.

You may send an e-mail to foia@hq.dhs.gov, call 202-343-1743 or toll free 1-866-431-0486, or you may contact our FOIA Public Liaison in the same manner. Additionally, you have a right to seek dispute resolution services from the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) which mediates disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies as a non-exclusive alternative to litigation. If you are requesting access to your own records (which is considered a Privacy Act request), you should know that OGIS does not have the authority to handle requests made under the Privacy Act of 1974. You may contact OGIS as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001, e-mail at ogis@nara.gov; telephone at 202-741-5770; toll free at 1-877-684-6448; or facsimile at 202-741-5769.

Provisions of FOIA allow DHS to charge for processing fees, up to \$25, unless you seek a waiver of fees. In this instance, because the cost is below the \$25 minimum, there is no charge.

Sincerely,



James Holzer
FOIA Program Specialist